

Message Text

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ACTION OES-05

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SUBJECT: FAD FOR NUCLEAR SCARE STORIES REACHES CANADA

ALSO PASS ERDA AND NRC

REF: OTTAWA 3380

1. DR. MORTON SHULMAN'S FIRST GUEST AS HOST LOCAL CHANNEL'S NIGHTLY INTERVIEW/FEATURE SHOW SEPTEMBER 8, WAS DR. ROBERT WILSON, MANAGER OF ONTARIO HYDRO'S HEALTH PHYSICS DEPARTMENT TO DISCUSS RADIOACTIVE SPILLAGE FROM DOUGLAS POINT NUCLEAR POWER STATION. SHULMAN HAD RELEASED COPIES OF PAST WILSON MEMO'S INDICATING TWO SPILLAGES INTO LAKE HURON AND STORY COVERED PROMINENTLY TORONTO SEPTEMBER 8 PRESS. SHULMAN SAID MEMOS MAILED TO HIM ANONYMOUSLY SEVERAL WEEKS AGO.

2. WILSON MADE GOOD USE OF SHORT PERIOD AVAILABLE TO UNDERLINE THAT WHILE SPILLAGES HIGHER THAN NORMAL, NO DANGER TO PUBLIC INVOLVED. HE SAID SPILLAGES EXCEEDED MONTHLY LIMITS BUT TOTAL FOR 1970 WAS 39 PERCENT ANNUAL PERMISSABLE. HE EMPHASIZED CONSERVATIVE NATURE OF LIMIT IN THAT PERSON ANNUALLY EATING 40 POUNDS OF FISH FROM WATER IN WHICH FULL LIMIT DISCHARGED WOULD ABSORB 50 MILLIRANDS OF RADIATION-
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LESS THAN NORMAL X-RAY.

3. SHULMAN ASKED WHY HYDRO REPLY TO HIS RECENT LETTER STATED THERE HAS BEEN NO SIGNIFICANT RELEASES OF RADIATION INTO LAND, AIR, WATER WHEN SUCH DISCHARGES EVIDENCED BY MEMORANDA. WILSON REPLIED THAT HYDRO POSITION HINGED ON WORD SIGNIFICANT, THAT PHYSICAL VOLUME OF WASTE COULD BE LARGE BUT CONCENTRATION OF RADIOACTIVITY AND ITS NATURE AND HALF LIKE REAL KEY IN DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE.

4. SHULMAN SWITCHED QUESTIONING TO QUESTION OF PICKERING NUCLEAR POWER STATION AND ASKED IF IT TRUE THAT DISCHARGE AMOUNT HAS NOT HAD MANIFOLD INCREASE IN 1972-74 AND THAT PICKERING IN 1974 DISCHARGED MORE THAN DOUGLAS POINT IN 1970. WILSON ANSWERED THAT DISCHARGE RATE OF NUCLEAR STATION STARTING UP FOR FIRST TIME BOUND TO INCREASE DRAMATICALLY AND THAT, WHILE HE DID NOT HAVE VOLUME FIGURES IN FRONT OF HIM, PICKERING AVERAGING HYDRO GOAL OF LESS THAN 1 PERCENT OF ANNUAL LIMIT. HE CONTINUED THAT CANADAIN TRAVELLING TO EUROPE BY JET WOULD PICK UP MORE RADIATION THAN PERSON STANDING AT LIMIT OF PICKERING STATION.

5. WILSON SAID THAT CONCERN IN SPILLAGE IS AGAIN QUESTION OF RADIOACTIVE CONCENTRATION NOT VOLUME AND LONG LIFE SUBSTANCE LIKE CELCIUM 137. HYDRO, HE SAID, HAD DEFENSES IN DEPTH TO PREVENT SUCH ACCIDENTS. AS PARTING GIFT TO SHULMAN HE GAVE COPY OF CANADIAN NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL DOCUMENT SHOWING THAT OF ANNUAL AVERAGE RADIOACTIVE ABSORPTION BY CANADAINS OF 180 MILLIRADS, ONLY 0.003 COMES FROM NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS.

6. EMBASSY SCIATT REQUESTED TORONTO REPORT ONTARIO HYDRO REACTION TO NEWS ARTICLES. HYDRO PUBLIC RELATIONS INFORMED POST THAT AFTER LENGTHY MEETING SEPT 8, HYDRO DECIDED TO ISSUE NO PRESS RELEASE BUT TO RESPOND BY WILSON APPEARANCE ON SHULMAN SHOW.

7. COMMENT: WILSON MADE GOOD IMPRESSION OF LOGICAL EXPLANATION OF HYDRO OPERATIONS. SHULMAN IS NO NEWCOMER TO EXPOSE TACTICS AND MADE THE NEWS MORE THAN ONCE BY THIS TECHNIQUE WHILE IN ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.
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